

Members of the Senate Local Government Committee,

I write in support of SB 57 to revise laws governing special districts. I served on the interim committee that worked on this bill and felt that we did a good job of sorting through some tough issues.

The interim was a great time to look at what we were trying to accomplish with this bill. As it stands now, there are numerous special districts that can be created in the State of Montana. And each one of them has a little bit different rule on how to create the district. This can cause a problem when local governments try to start a special district. They may be used to one set of rules and go ahead and implement the district using those rules. If they aren't following the correct rules, then the district may be delayed in being created.

The scope of our mission on the interim committee was to sort through all the various special district statutes and try to put forward a solution that would allow for a uniform special district creation act. Thus when a local government wants to create a special district, they know the rules they have to play by.

As a local elected official, I really appreciate the work the committee did because it will allow me to better follow the rules for special district creation. We didn't create any new rules, just did a good job of editing the ones we already have and if the bill passed I would feel more confident that when our local government creates a special district, we have done it correctly.

Really the choice comes down to sticking with the status quo of a vast array of different special district creation rules. Or simplifying the rules so that there is uniform process for creating the special districts included in the legislation.

As a local elected official I hope you consider making my job easier and pass SB 57.

Thanks for your consideration.

Chris "Shoots" Veis
City of Billings Councilmember
Ward III